Guidance for Preparing Case Material
Session 9

Evaluation Process Summary

The Research and Development Classification Process (RDCP) provides for the review of covered positions to ensure the classification is current and accurate. This includes research, scientific, and engineering positions classified under the Research Grade Evaluation Guide (RGEG) and the Equipment Development Grade Evaluation Guide (EDGEG), issued by the US Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

Noncompetitive promotions are permitted when "impact-of-the-person-on-the-job" can be demonstrated and documented. ***This policy is based on the premise that the special knowledge, skills, abilities, talents, or achievements of an individual may have an important effect on the duties, responsibilities, and expectation of the job held***. The Position Classification Standards, (OPM, 1999).

Sometimes the unique capabilities, experience, or knowledge a particular employee brings to the position can affect the work performed and therefore, the classification of the position. The relationship of the employee to the position can be recognized when these qualities broaden the nature or scope and effect of the work being performed. The RGEG and EDGEG guides provide classification factors that make it possible to have a meaningful classification review and to determine an individual's impact-on-the-job.

The RDCP allows for an evaluation of the incumbent's responsibilities and performance impact-on-the-job against the OPM factors used to determine proper classification and grade level. This review is conducted by classification experts and when determined appropriate, a peer panel. The classification factors listed below provide the criteria for the classification evaluation.

Application of the OPM Classification Guides

Research Grade Evaluation Guide (RGEG) – Grade levels of research positions depend essentially on the same elements, regardless of the subject field. The RGEG groups these common elements into the following four factors for evaluation purposes:

    Factor I   Research Assignment
    Factor II   Supervision Received
    Factor III   Guidelines and Originality
    Factor IV   Qualifications and Contributions

The classification factors are explained in detail in the RGEG and can be accessed from the OPM website at: http://www.opm.gov/fedclass/gsresch.pdf.

Equipment Development Grade Evaluation Guide (EDGEG) - Due to the breadth and variety of work involved in these professions, the grade level criteria are issued in three separate parts and reflect specific areas for evaluation.   Each part reflects the common elements found to be essential to the profession, regardless of the subject field.

Part I: Product Development Engineering: For use in grade evaluation of professional engineering positions engaged in new equipment development.

> Factor I   Assignment Characteristics
> Factor II   Level of Responsibility

Part II: Project Management Engineering: For use in grade evaluation of engineers who manage the combined efforts of contractors and Government employees to accomplish a specific development project.

> Factor I   Scope of Assignment
> Factor II   Technical Complexity of the Assignment
> Factor III   Responsibility and Authority
> Factor IV   Technical and Managerial Demands

Part III: Experimental Development: For use in grade evaluation of professional engineering and scientific positions performing experimental and investigative activities to develop new and improved equipment and to advance technology.

> Factor I   Research Situation or Assignment
> Factor II   Supervision Received
> Factor III   Guidelines and Originality
> Factor IV   Qualifications and Contributions

The classification factors are explained in detail in the EDGEG which can be accessed from the OPM website at http://www.opm.gov/fedclass/gsequpdv.pdf.

Submission Criteria and Case Material Required

Position Descriptions

The primary source for the classification evaluation is an accurate and current position description. This can be most effectively accomplished by both the supervisor and incumbent working together to update the PD. In situations where a new supervisor is assigned to the incumbent, previous supervisor(s) with more knowledge of the incumbent and the work of the position may be asked to provide input. The PD should be prepared in a narrative format which is consistent with the factor format of the RGEG and EDGEG and should align with the related factor criteria. This provides the basis of the classification evaluation. The supervisor will certify that the PD is current and accurate and forward it through the management chain for signature and approval.

Useful classification information is found in the Position Description Management (PDM). This tool provides a good source of summarized classification elements from the RGEG and EDGEG. This information is automated and available in hard copy. Detailed information to assist in updating research PD's is provided in the document, *Guidelines for Preparation of Position Descriptions for Research Positions.*

1) The position descriptions for individuals covered by **EDGEG Parts I and II** must be prepared to accurately reflect the appropriate factors. The PD's should provide current and sufficient information that reflects the duties and responsibilities of the position. The case material will include an Accomplishment Record to provide supporting documentation illustrating the incumbent's most significant accomplishments, contributions, and their impact.

2) The position descriptions for individuals covered by **RGEG and EDGEG-Part III** must be prepared to accurately reflect the four factor format. Also refer to Guidelines for Preparation of Position Descriptions for Research Positions. Incumbents will prepare an Accomplishment Record and supplemental information addressing their qualifications and contributions (Factor IV). **This factor is double-weighted in the classification evaluation**. Proper evaluation of your material is dependent on good documentation and evidence of your scientific stature, recognition, and contributions which is the determinative of the Factor IV score, and which has the greatest impact on the grade level assigned.

All position descriptions and case material must be approved and certified by the supervisor and approved by the management chain prior to being evaluated.

Guidance for Preparation of the Accomplishment Record

Your material is a critical document and your primary opportunity to illustrate how your job responsibility and performance have impacted the position you hold. You must provide detailed information regarding the *impact* of your most important research, scientific, engineering, or development accomplishments.

In addition, recency of the accomplishment is important. The total history of accomplishment is considered, however, recent research, development, or a similar activity which assures maintenance of competence is essential to full credit for past accomplishments.

The Accomplishment Record and supplemental information provides the details and supporting documentation for your individual qualifications and contributions, as well as providing evidence for the other factors. This information is highly significant in selecting the most appropriate classification and grade level for these positions. The standardized format is an important feature in ensuring a complete and properly prepared package. It will help to ensure the required information is easy to find. This information

is needed to provide classifiers and panel reviewers with the critical facts to evaluate the position against the classification criteria. It is your responsibility to become thoroughly knowledgeable of the factors relevant to your position. You should work closely with your supervisor in developing your Accomplishment Record. You also can contact the OCHM staff for assistance.

1) **Most Significant Contributions** – List up to five of your recent and most significant contributions having impact on science, technology, product development, or program management. List and number them in chronological order beginning with the most recent.

The purpose of submitting significant contributions is to permit an assessment of the impact of your original contributions to your field and on organizational programs. Each significant contribution must summarize the *research role or assignment,* the *accomplishments* or *contributions to the accomplishment*, and the *impact* of the accomplishments and contributions, along with supporting documentation, *evidence,* and with the most *appropriate contacts* for verification. Each accomplishment must be documented by evidence of publications, patents, products, awards, supporting statements from knowledgeable authorities, or similar recognition. This information should be written in a brief, concise paragraph.

- **What was your research role/situation or your assignment?** Describe your role/situation/assignment, what was done, and how it was done. It is important to accurately depict your activities and to describe the other relevant factors required for your position (i.e., level of responsibility, scope of the assignment, technical complexity of the assignment, supervision received, etc.)
- **What was the contribution?** It is important to describe as accurately as possible what you as an individual contributed. This is particularly important for work involving a team effort, and to describe your work as it contributed to the total or group effort.
- **What is the impact on science or technology, the degree of adoption or implementation, or the economic or program importance of the contribution?** It is most important to describe the actual impact of the contribution. This sometimes changes with time, and therefore, it is important to be precise in writing this statement. Include tangible evidence or exhibits as supporting documentation which demonstrates the impact of the contribution.

General Guidelines:

- Each significant contribution statement should not exceed one-half of a page in length.
- Typically identify contributions since your last promotion or entry on duty with NASA.
- Recentness of accomplishments is important in showing maintenance of competence and evidence of keeping up with advancing and changing disciplines.

- Undue detail, verbosity, and needless repetition may weaken rather than strengthen your package.
- Begin sentences with action verbs.
- Use gender-neutral terms and style instead of saying "he" or "she" or "his" or "her."

Supporting Documentation

Each contribution should identify supporting documentation. A maximum of three evidences or exhibits may be used to document each contribution. It is not necessary to use the maximum number of allowed exhibits. It is more important to carefully select those most effective in supporting your contributions. Supporting documents must be referenced to the specific contribution. Full credit for a contribution cannot be given when the contribution is documented solely by the narrative description.

Acceptable documentation of evidences/exhibits includes:

- Publications, i.e., technical reports, policy papers, review articles, peer-reviewed journal articles, patents, inventions, awards, hardware or software products, etc. (include dates).
- Concise statement signed and dated by a knowledgeable authority such as a NASA staff expert, supervisors, an industry representative, etc.

Contact List

Provide contact names (maximum of three) for each of the **most significant contributions.** Provide the contact's official capacity, location, telephone number, and knowledge of contribution. Reference each contact to the contribution number listed in your material.

The following categories should be listed with a brief description:

2) **Stature, Recognition, and Impact**

- **Honors and Awards** – List professional honors and awards. Give a brief and sufficient description to enable the reviewer to determine the true significance. Differentiate between group and individual awards.

- **Special Invitations** – These are specific invitations to you to present a paper before science-oriented or industry groups, prepare a paper or a chapter for a book, conduct a seminar, etc. These provide good evidence of professional recognition and standing. Be selective since the stature of the group issuing the invitation is just as important as the fact that an invitation was received. For each entry list the title, date, location, and organization or purpose of the gathering. If a paper was subsequently published, reference it in the publication listing.

- **Membership in Professional and Honorary Societies** – List the titles and dates of membership and office and committee assignments.

3) **Advisory and Consultant Activities**

- **Participation in scientific meetings, technical conferences, workshops, etc.** List the type of meeting, title of the presentation or paper, and location and date given. It will be necessary to determine whether to list a paper here or under the special invitations category. Include it in one place, but not both. Also, if the same meeting or conference has been attended a number of times, summarize the information rather than listing them individually.

- **Professional advisory and consulting activities** – List each activity with the name and type of organization or the situation, dates performed, and type and significance of the contribution. If numerous, summarize information and list only most recent activities.

- **Special assignments or outreach activities** – Briefly describe the professional or technical nature of the work and list the dates.

4) **Inventions, Patents, and Products** – Provide a brief description and the dates.

5) **Other Significant Information** – Describe any information not covered in the above categories that should be considered in the evaluation. For example, material submitted but not yet accepted for publication should be listed here, not in the publication list. Also, other activities which are part of your responsibilities should be listed along with your role and how it meets the goals of the organization.

6) **Publications** – This includes policy papers, technical reports, books, book chapters, journal articles, conference papers, thesis/dissertations, etc. List only those items already published or accepted by the publishing agent, and include dates. This list should be on a separate sheet and attached at the end of the package. List publications in chronological order, all authors in proper order, and give full references.

All submitted material must be approved by the supervisor and management chain prior to being evaluated.

RDCP documents and guidance can be accessed at: http://ohr.larc.nasa.gov/rdcp/.